

Message Text

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ACTION EB-06

INFO OCT-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 RSC-01 TRSE-00

EUR-08 AEC-05 ISO-00 MC-01 OES-02 EA-06 ACDA-05 /035 W

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FM USMISSION OECD PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASH DC 4040

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 OECD PARIS 25284

EXCON

E.O. 11652: XGDS1

TAGS: ESTC, COCOM

SUBJECT: COCOM LIST REVIEW AEL-1 SOURCE AND FISSIONABLE
MATERIALS

REF: A. STATE 231375

B. COCOM DOC. (74) PROC. 30/DEF AEL 1/9

1. ON FRENCH PROPOSAL TO DELETE DEPLETED URANIUM, THE ITALIANS, GERMANS, UK, NETHERLANDS AND BELGIUM REGISTERED THEIR SUPPORT ON BASIS THAT DEPLETED URANIUM HAS NO STRATEGIC OR ECONOMIC VALUE. JAPAN INDICATED THEY WERE OPENMINDED. CANADA STATED THEY COULD NOT ACCEPT THE FRENCH PROPOSAL AND RESERVED THEIR POSITION AS DID THE US. THE CANADIAN DEL STATED THAT HIS AUTHORITIES REGARDED DEPLETED URANIUM TO BE OF STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE IN THE SAME WAY AS ANY URANIUM.

2. BELIEVE RECORD OF DEBATE WILL INDICATE THAT DISCUSSIONS DIVIDED ALONG LINES WHICH BY NOW ARE VERY FAMILIAR. THE US REPRESENTATIVE, WITH MORAL SUPPORT FROM HIS CANADIAN COLLEAGUE, SOUGHT TO FOCUS DEBATE ON PURELY "STRATEGIC" ARGUMENTS REINFORCED BY (A) LACK OF DIRECT EVIDENCE OF SIZE OF SOVIET SUPPLY OF URANIUM, (B) FACT THAT DEPLETED URANIUM IS ITSELF A SOURCE MATERIAL CONTAINING THIRTY TO FORTY PERCENT OF ITS
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FISSILE CONTENT WHICH SOVIETS WOULD ACQUIRE, AND (C)

WOULD BE ABLE TO EXPLOIT, BECAUSE OF THEIR SURPLUS ENRICHMENT CAPABILITY, JUST AS THE US HAD DONE IN THE SIXTIES AND WILL REPEAT IN FUTURE. ON THE OTHER HAND, FRENCH AND BRITISH REPRESENTATIVES ATTEMPTED TO FOCUS DEBATE ON PURELY "RATIONAL" ARGUMENTS REINFORCED BY (A) THE FACT THAT THE COST IN SEPARATIVE WORK UNITS AND TIME OF REFEEDING IS SO MUCH GREATER THAN THAT FOR NATURAL URANIUM WHICH IS ABUNDANTLY AVAILABLE TO THE USSR, (B) THE SOVIETS HAVE OFFERED IN EVERY CASE THE OPTIONAL RETURN OF TAILS IN ENRICHMENT SERVICE CONTRACTS, (C) THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ASSAYS FOR THE DEPLETED MATERIAL, IF SET LOW ENOUGH, COULD ACTUALLY COST THE USSR SOME OF ITS OWN ENRICHED MATERIAL, (D) THE SOVIETS ARE, IN ANY EVENT, A NUCLEAR WEAPONS STATE MEMBER OF IAEA, AND (E) THE DEGREE OF STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE OF DEPLETED URANIUM IS INVERSELY PROPORTIONAL TO THE EXTENT TO WHICH IT HAS BEEN STRIPPED.

3. BURDEN OF DEBATE FELL UPON US, FRANCE AND UK AND OTHER DELS FOR THE MOST PART LISTENED BEFORE REGISTERING THEIR VOTES.

4. TOWARD THE CONCLUSION OF DISCUSSIONS, THE CHAIRMAN RECALLED THAT THIS MATTER HAD BEEN DISCUSSED EARLIER (REF B) AND ASKED GERMAN REP GAYMANN WHETHER THAT PROPOSAL WAS STILL OPEN. HE THEN ASKED US REP WHETHER THE POSITION OF THE US WOULD REMAIN UNCHANGED IF SOME

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SOLUTION SUCH AS THE EARLIER GERMAN ONE WERE TO BE INTRODUCED. THE FRENCH INDICATED THAT THEIR OWN INSISTENCE THAT TOLL ENRICHMENT NEED NOT BE BROUGHT TO COMMITTEE ATTENTION (BUT RATHER TREATED AS A "TEMPORARY EXPORT") WOULD NOT BE IRREVERSABLE IN THE FACE OF SUCH A COMPROMISE. THE US REP ASCERTAINED THAT THE FRENCH DID NOT INTEND TO OFFER A COMPROMISE FORMULA AT THE PRESENT TIME AND INDICATED THAT HE DID NOT BELIEVE THE US WOULD OFFER ONE. HOWEVER, HE NOTED THAT DESPITE EARLIER OBJECTION, THE US WOULD EXAMINE SUCH A CUTOFF PROPOSAL IF SUBMITTED BY ANOTHER DELEGATION. THE CHAIR ASKED PARTICIPANTS CAREFULLY TO EXAMINE THE QUESTION OF SOME CUTOFF BELOW WHICH TAILS WOULD NOT HAVE TO BE RETURNED. THE FIRST ROUND DISCUSSION ENDED WHEN FRENCH STATED THAT THE SECOND ELEMENT OF THEIR PROPOSAL, DELETION OF THE NOTE SUB (C), WOULD AUTOMATICALLY FOLLOW RESOLUTION OF THE TAILS DISPOSITION ISSUE.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: WE BELIEVE THAT ON BALANCE, A READING OF THE RECORD WILL REVEAL THAT OPPOSITION TO RETURN OF ALL TAILS IS SIGNIFICANT. MOREOVER, US WILL IN ANY EVENT BE CALLED UPON TO JUSTIFY A FINAL POSITION AND TO PROVIDE ANSWERS TO OUTSTANDING QUESTIONS IN CONFIDENTIAL

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THE SECOND ROUND. NO MEMBER GAVE ANY INDICATION OF BEING SATISFIED WITH THE STATUS QUO AND THEREFORE WE BELIEVE THAT REEXAMINATION OF THE US POSITION ALONG THE LINES FORESEEN IN PARAGRAPH 3, REF A IS IN ORDER.
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